



You've probably heard about post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) on the news. Perhaps you've seen an article or two in the newspaper. The reality is that you will hear a lot more because these injuries touch every aspect of a veteran's life as he or she reintegrates into the community after returning from deployment.

The RAND Corporation reports that more than 30% of returning service personnel "have a mental health condition or reported experiencing a traumatic brain injury." Nearly 20% meet the criteria for PTSD or depression. And, multiple tours can increase the rate of combat stress by 50%.

Virginia's share of this serious health concern comes to more than 50,000 veterans over the next 20 years. Considering the impact on spouses and children, the number increases to 200,000 during the same time period. It's a public health issue that the current service delivery system is not prepared to address. So, the 2008 General Assembly passed and Governor Tim Kaine signed into law legislation directing the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS), in cooperation with the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) and the Department Rehabilitative Services (DRS), to establish the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.

### **What is the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program?**

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program will coordinate support services for veterans with stress-related and traumatic brain injuries resulting from service in a combat area. The program will ensure that these veterans and their families receive timely assessment, treatment, and support. The Program will support Virginia veterans, and members of the Virginia National Guard and Virginia residents of the Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service. The program also supports the family members of these veterans, Guard and Reserve members.

### **What kind of services will be provided?**

The Wounded Warrior Program will provide mental health, substance abuse and traumatic brain injury services, including case management, outpatient, family support, and rehabilitative services. However, other services, such as financial assistance, housing, and transportation, may be available as we

partner with organizations assisting veterans and with private donors.

### **Where can people go for help from the Wounded Warrior Program?**

The program will not be fully functioning until early 2009. In the meantime, if you or someone you know is a veteran—or the family member of a veteran—who may have suffered stress-related or traumatic brain injury as a result of service in combat, call Martha Mead at 804-382-0421 or visit [www.virginiaforveterans.com](http://www.virginiaforveterans.com).

### **Doesn't the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provide all the services necessary for veterans and their families?**

The U. S. Department of Defense provides treatment and health care for military service personnel up until they are discharged or retire. Veterans have access to VA health care services but care from the VA for their family members is only available in certain circumstances. Additionally, for some

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## **Virginia Wounded Warrior Program**

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program is a state program established by the Virginia General Assembly, Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-2001.1. The Virginia Department of Veterans Services is responsible for establishing the Program, monitoring it, and coordinating services.

The program is funded with a state appropriation; however, this appropriation will not cover the full cost of providing much needed services to our wounded warriors and their families. Your generous support will ensure that these men and women get the care they need and earned through their service and sacrifice.

Your contribution is tax exempt under Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 2.2-2719 of the Code of Virginia. Donations cannot revert to the Commonwealth's General Fund. The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation is subject to annual audits by the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts.

For additional information, contact Col. Jack Hilgers (USMC, Ret), Department of Veterans Services, 757-481-4164 or 804-382-3715, [jack.hilgers@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:jack.hilgers@dvs.virginia.gov) or Steven Combs, 804-786-0294, [steven.combs@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:steven.combs@dvs.virginia.gov).



veterans, access to a VA medical center or clinic may be difficult due to geographic distance or because of their injuries.

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program does not replace the care or services provided by the VA. The program will work in cooperation with the VA. It will use existing community services to ensure that veterans who cannot access VA care and the family members of veterans receive the healthcare and services they need.

Doesn't a Wounded Warrior Program already exist?

Yes, several programs use the Wounded Warrior name but each one has its own unique mission and serves a specific clientele. Many programs are available at the federal, state, and community levels to assist veterans and their families. However, finding the right program that's accessible, affordable, and that meets the unique needs of the individual can be difficult.

When fully established by early next year, Virginia's Wounded Warrior Program will use Virginia 2-1-1 as a tool to identify and classify available resources. By calling this easy-to-remember phone number, veterans and family members can speak with a live representative who will assist them in locating the help they need. (Dial 211 or visit [www.211virginia.org](http://www.211virginia.org).)

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program will also partner with Virginia's Community Services Boards and brain injury service providers. This partnership will ensure that these organizations have the capacity and funding necessary to provide services to qualifying veterans and their family members.

How is Virginia's program different from these other wounded warrior programs?

Virginia's program serves Virginia veterans and family members regardless of their branch of service. To receive assistance, veterans must have stress-related or traumatic brain injuries resulting from service in a combat area. Virginia's program focuses on providing behavioral health and traumatic brain injury services using existing federal, state, and local service providers. Resources permitting, other services may be available, such as case management, outpatient, and family support services.

Is this a state or federal program?  
The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program is a state program established by the Virginia General Assembly, Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-2001.1.

Who manages the program?  
The Department of Veterans Services (DVS), in cooperation with the DMHMRSAS and DRS, is responsible for establishing the Program, monitoring it, and coordinating services. DVS is also working with the Virginia National Guard to coordinate with their reintegration initiatives and Family Assistance Services.

DVS is in the process of setting up the Wounded Warrior Program Office. The office will be staffed by an executive director and three regional directors. Program set-up should be complete by December. The fund distribution process is being developed. Existing Community Services Board, DVS, and other structures will be used. Fund disbursement should begin between January and March 2009.

How is the Program funded?  
The program is funded by a \$4.4 million appropriation over the 2008-09 biennium. However, this appropriation will not cover the full cost. Therefore, the Commonwealth is seeking additional sources of funding, including private donations.

How can I help?  
Virginia has provided a limited amount of funding for the Wounded Warrior Program. The Commonwealth anticipates that its citizens will want to help. The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation is available to receive contributions to support the Program.

Use the card below to make a contribution today!

The Foundation is an agency of the state and is eligible to receive tax deductible contributions under Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code and Section 2.2-2719 of the Code of Virginia. Donations are placed in the Veterans Services Fund and cannot revert to the Commonwealth's General Fund. In this case, they only can be used for the Wounded Warrior Program. Donations to the Foundation are audited annually by the Commonwealth's Auditor of Public Accounts. This assures that the maximum amount of citizens' donations will go to our veterans and not to administrative overhead.

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Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

☐ **Yes!** Count on my support to help Virginia's veterans—and their family members—who are dealing with the effects of traumatic brain injuries, combat stress, and post-traumatic stress disorder. I am enclosing/pledging my generous contribution in the amount of:

☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$5 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Virginia Veterans Services Foundation, for VWWP

NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE
PHONE	EMAIL	
EMPLOYER (FOR MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS)		

Mail checks to:  
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation  
Attention Jack Hilgers  
900 East Main Street, Ground Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219